

# THE BANNER

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WALTER W. JONES, Editor.

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THURSDAY, Dec. 26, 1912.

## GENEVIEVE'S GUEST PROVED RIGHT MAN

By DOROTHY BLACKMORE.

Genevieve joined her mother at the tea table beside the creeper-covered trellis.

"Father has just telephoned from the office to say that he has missed his train."

"Oh!" interrupted Mrs. Marston, with a sigh of genuine disappointment, "that is too bad. And on such a hot night, too."

"That isn't the worst of it," said Genevieve. "He has asked a friend—Mr. Hunter Barnes of London—to meet him at Jamaica and come out for dinner and spend the night with us. He's a business associate of the London house and father feels in duty bound to entertain him. He's a perfect stranger in this country and, as father had no way to communicate with him, the poor man is likely to be wandering about anywhere this side of Timbuctoo!" Genevieve filled her cup and waited for her mother to gather the situation.

"There's nothing to do but wait," said Mrs. Marston, after a moment's reflection. "We'll postpone dinner until 7:30, and maybe your father will have found his friend somewhere."

"And maybe he won't, too," added Genevieve. "Poor soul!"

The attention of the two women was attracted to the path in front of their pretty suburban house. A man stood looking intently at the gate and bordering flower beds.

"Mother," whispered Genevieve, grasping her parent's arm none too gently. "That's he!"

"That's who?" "Father's friend—he answers the description father gave me over the 'phone, and doesn't he look as if he were searching for some one?" Genevieve turned to the ramblers and began ostensibly to pick a cluster, in reality she wanted only to get a view of the stranger without seeming to notice him.

"He seems to be going on," said Mrs. Marston.

"But reluctantly—see. He is looking at the grounds, at the flowers. Now—he sees us and is embarrassed. I wonder what we should do? Father said he would probably turn up."

"Surely a mere passerby wouldn't stare so," remarked Mrs. Marston. "Are you quite sure your father said tall and dark?"

"Quite," replied Genevieve, rising. "And I'm going to get him." Genevieve picked her way out from among the roses and walked straight to the hedge instead of going by the circuitous route to the path. The tall stranger was moving on, reluctantly.

"Are you—Mr. Robert Hunter Barnes?" Genevieve asked, hesitatingly.

The man turned quickly toward her, his soft hat in his hand in an instant. "No; my name is Kensington—James R.—and I must ask you to pardon my seeming rudeness in staring at your grounds. I am a landscape artist and, as I have not seen this place since I laid it out five years ago, I was anxious to know how it has done. The roses are wonderful and—you have added to them."

Genevieve was endeavoring to recover her composure after the first realization that she had made an error. "It is I who must ask your pardon. My mother and I both decided that you were my father's friend, Mr. Barnes, for whom we are looking. He is a stranger, and father described him as tall and dark. You looked like a stranger seeking a number, so—you'll pardon me?"

Kensington smiled, and as Mrs. Marston joined them he explained again his own conduct. Then he added: "I, too, am under a slight difficulty as to my dining place. Mrs. Thompson, one of your neighbors on the hill, asked me to dine with them quite informally tonight, and to come out early, if I cared to, and look at the various places I had laid out some time since."

"I went to her house and was informed by the maid at the door that she had instructions to let no one in without Mrs. Thompson's orders. Evidently the fact that she had asked me to dinner had slipped Mrs. Thompson's mind and she has gone for the day without informing the servants. They had a house robbed by a man who said he wanted to mend the clocks and had come under instruction from Mr. Thompson." Kensington laughed. "So you see how the servants regard me. I shall wait now until Mrs. Thompson returns, and then—it will be all right."

"Meantime, do come in and have a cup of tea," Mrs. Marston said, graciously. "It is quite natural on the part of the servants," she laughed as they sought the tea table.

"But I wonder where poor Mr. Barnes is," said Genevieve as they sat in a rustic seat in full view of the pathway.

"His loss is my gain," remarked Kensington, teacup in hand. "But I trust he will find you."

"Mr. Marston will be here on the next train and perhaps he will have found him," Mrs. Marston said.

Until train time, Kensington told the two women much that convinced them of his sincerity. He related to them the story of how the little settlement in which they live originated.

"It was a great, rolling cow pasture when Mr. Thompson first found it, and as he was desirous of establishing a home for himself and of surrounding himself with a few congenial neighbors, he bought the entire piece of ground—all that was left of an old estate—and asked me to come up and lay it out, being careful to place the houses so as to preserve every one of the old trees that stood in the pasture. That accounts for the irregularity of the roads and the hit-or-miss setting of the houses, but—pardon my seeming self-praise—I tried to make it artistic irregularity, and Mr. Thompson thinks I have succeeded."

"You have indeed—I just love it," Genevieve declared enthusiastically. "Oh-h, here comes father with a tall, dark man."

It was not a half hour until Mr. and Mrs. Thompson came anxiously along the road in their automobile searching both sides of the street for their guest who had been so inhospitably treated at their home.

"I can assure you Mrs. and Miss Marston have made up for the suspicion of your servants," he laughingly told Mrs. Thompson. "I have no grievance whatever," he added, looking at Genevieve. "I ask only this—that you invite me often hereafter and let me come to see my new made friends, Mrs. Thompson, as well as your two good selves."

Mrs. Thompson's eyes twinkled. She had a keen intuition and something told her that a romance had been begun between her bachelor landscape artist and Miss Marston.

"My intuition never fails me," she said to Mr. Thompson the following June when they were all busy with preparations for an out-of-door wedding, a wedding among the roses where James Kensington first saw his bride. "It never fails me, dear," she added.

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### Philosophy of Life.

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